

HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 45

47TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2005

INTRODUCED BY

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A JOINT MEMORIAL

TO URGE ESTABLISHMENT OF MINIMUM RECREATIONAL POOLS OF WATER
FOR LAKES AND RESERVOIRS WITHIN NEW MEXICO STATE PARKS.

WHEREAS, lake and reservoir storage is a key component of
effective water management in the state of New Mexico,
especially during times of drought; and

WHEREAS, the level of water is directly related to fishing
and boating interests, water quality, species reproductive
rates, aesthetic and recreational values of parks, lakes and
reservoirs, quality of life and the economy of surrounding
areas; and

WHEREAS, maintaining a permanent conservation or
recreational pool at lakes within state parks would protect the
natural resources, recreational values, quality-of-life and
economic benefits of these state parks; and

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1 WHEREAS, it would benefit the state to establish and
2 sustain minimum recreational pool levels at all reservoirs and
3 lakes located within state parks to serve the purposes stated
4 above; and

5 WHEREAS, a minimum recreational pool level was established
6 at Elephant Butte reservoir within Elephant Butte Lake state
7 park, but the recreational pool has not been maintained due to
8 drought condition and reservoir spills; and

9 WHEREAS, there is growing interest in the feasibility of
10 increasing water storage and establishing minimum recreational
11 pools to benefit recreation at places such as Eagle Nest Lake
12 state park, Heron Lake state park and Ute Lake state park; and

13 WHEREAS, a minimum recreational pool of water, the pool
14 level that supports boat access, fish reproduction and aquatic
15 stewardship, can be quantified; and

16 WHEREAS, the release and storage of water at state lakes
17 and reservoirs is governed either by state law, federal law,
18 contract, interstate compact or combinations of two or more of
19 the foregoing; and

20 WHEREAS, storage of additional water in Eagle Nest Lake
21 state park to benefit recreation has been hampered by
22 constraints imposed by permit number seventy-one administered
23 by the department of game and fish; and

24 WHEREAS, in the case of Heron Lake state park, existing
25 federal law and bureau of reclamation policies are preventing

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1 the storage of additional water from the San Juan-Chama project
2 for longer periods that would benefit recreation and tourism;
3 and

4 WHEREAS, the New Mexico congressional delegation can
5 assist the state of New Mexico in amending affected laws and
6 urging the bureau of reclamation to re-evaluate and change its
7 policies regarding storage of water from San Juan Chama project
8 in Heron Lake state park;

9 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
10 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the energy, minerals and natural
11 resources department, the department of game and fish, the
12 office of the state engineer and the interstate stream
13 commission submit to the appropriate interim legislative
14 committee in 2005 for its consideration an analysis and set of
15 recommendations identifying issues, costs, limitations and the
16 feasibility of establishing and maintaining minimum
17 recreational pool levels for the fifteen lakes and reservoirs
18 located within the state park system; and

19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the department of game and
20 fish report to the appropriate interim legislative committee in
21 2005 regarding the department's recommendations for how to
22 increase water available for recreation in Eagle Nest lake; and

23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
24 transmitted to the New Mexico congressional delegation to
25 request their assistance in improving the situation with

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1 respect to water available for recreation at Heron lake; and

2 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
3 transmitted to the energy, minerals and natural resources
4 department, the department of game and fish, the office of the
5 state engineer and the interstate stream commission.